

Chapter 3

THE DISTRICT'S SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS AND BUDGETS

A RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Substance abuse programs, by their very nature, involve a variety of activities. To enforce illicit drug laws, criminal justice agencies oversee a vast number of initiatives and staff. A wide spectrum of health programming supports efforts to treat addicted individuals, some of whom are homeless and burdened with additional diseases. Drug prevention programs are most often located in several different agencies as they aim to target specific population groups.

Accounting for governmental expenditures for substance abuse programs is a difficult task. First, their wide array of efforts usually cut across numerous agencies. Second, substance abuse activities are often imbedded within other programs. As a result, these efforts often do not have specific dollar amounts attached to them that are readily identifiable in an agency's budget, but must instead, be estimated as part of a larger budget total. For example, drug law enforcement is not distinguishable as a separate budget line in the overall law enforcement budget, but is very much a part of law enforcement's workload. If, say, about 30 percent of workload involves activities related to drug control, then it is not unreasonable to assume that 30 percent of the District's budget for law enforcement funds drug control activities.

The following estimates represent a combined effort by the Mayor's Interagency Task Force on Substance Abuse Prevention, Treatment, and Control (Task Force), DC agency program officers, and DC budget officials to develop a comprehensive estimate of spending by the District of Columbia government for drug-related activities (the drug budget). The purpose of this estimate is to provide a sense of the magnitude of total

current efforts, as well as a description of how funds are distributed across different programmatic activities (e.g., treatment versus prevention). The Task Force will continue to refine its methodology for estimating total governmental expenditures in the District. For example, the figures contained in this chapter do not include the costs of alcoholic beverage control. Nor do they include the costs of other activities, such as enforcement of tobacco laws prohibiting sales to youth. The Task Force will continue to work with District agencies to refine and improve estimates of the impact of substance abuse on governmental expenditures.

"DIRECT" SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES: AT LEAST \$136 MILLION IN FY2001

Overall, the District spent an estimated \$136 million on programs to reduce substance abuse in the city in FY2001 as represented in Table 1. This sum represents 4 percent of the total DC budget for that year. Both local District revenues and federal grants provide the resources for this spending.

Law enforcement and corrections programs total over \$77 million (56 percent of total); substance abuse treatment, prevention, and drug testing programs total \$60 million (44 percent). The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) accounts for the largest share of direct expenditures with 33 percent of the total; the Departments of Health and Corrections are the next largest contributors, each representing 25 percent of total expenditures.

Table 1

**District of Columbia Substance Abuse
Direct Program Expenditures, FY 2001
(millions of dollars)**

DC Agency	FY 2001 Budget	Program Description
Corrections	34.3	Offender incarceration.
Superior Court	1.2	Juvenile Drug Court provides supervised treatment.
Metropolitan Police	44.7	Drug law enforcement and alcohol-related public safety.
DC Housing Authority	4.0	Drug elimination and prevention programs.
Child and Family Services Administration	2.7	Treatment Services.
DC Public Schools	1.2	Prevention programs.
Department of Mental Health	1.8	Substance abuse and mental health services.
Department of Human Services	11.9	Treatment services for youth offenders, individuals with disabilities, and other DHS clients.
Department of Health/APRA	34.5	Treatment and prevention services
Public Works	0.2	EAP and drug testing.

In addition, included in the budgets of District agencies, the federal government directly funds activities related to substance abuse. As Table 2 suggests, this contribution is significant. The resources of the Federal Bureau of Prisons as well as direct support for the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) total almost \$225 million. Overall, criminal justice programs account for 76 percent of direct federal expenditures with 24 percent going for treatment and prevention efforts.

The activities associated with District and federal substance abuse resource estimates included a wide range of prevention, treatment and law enforcement efforts. The

criminal justice programs focus on the enforcement of controlled substances laws as well as those associated with alcohol consumption. Of the combined District and federal total, the cost of incarcerating individuals for substance abuse-related crimes (illegal drug trafficking, driving under the influence, etc.) represents the largest share of the total, accounting for over \$200 million, or 56 percent of the total. In other words, for every dollar of direct federal and District spending on substance abuse-related initiatives, over half goes to incarcerate individuals who have violated laws.

Table 2

**District and Federal Substance Abuse
Program Expenditures, FY 2001 (millions
of dollars)**

Activity	District Budget	Federal Resources	FY2001 Total
Law Enforcement	44.7		44.7
Corrections	34.3	166.3	200.6
Offender testing/treatment	1.2	58.2	59.4
Other treatment and prevention	56.2		56.2
Total	136.4	224.5	360.9

The dramatic share of law enforcement efforts in the expenditure total of Table 2 illustrates the central role that substance abuse and drug trafficking play with regard to criminal activity in the District. As Table 3 indicates, the number of arrests for drug law violations and alcohol-related offenses has fallen about 15 percent over the past five years, but they remain a significant share of MPD activity. Overall, these figures represent

about 20 percent of all arrests. The total number of arrests for the more serious offense of distributing illicit drugs, however, increased by almost 30 percent during this period.

Not surprisingly, individuals charged with and/or convicted of drug law offenses account for a significant share of the jail population. A census of DC correctional

CSOSA uses drug testing to monitor drug use among arrestees, individuals awaiting trial, and those on probation. In addition, CSOSA provides treatment to those testing positive. Finally, the DC Superior Court provides some testing and treatment services to arrested juveniles.

Treatment and prevention programs outside of the criminal justice agencies total just 12 percent of the combined spending (\$56 million). The Department of Health's Addiction Recovery and Prevention Administration (APRA) oversees the provision of treatment services to District residents. In the fiscal year ending 2002, there were 11,015 admissions to APRA programs, with projected admissions for FY 2003 being roughly 11,000. (Note: APRA counts the total number of *admissions* with some clients being admitted, and counted, more than once.)

Several other agencies provide treatment and prevention services, albeit on a smaller scale than the collection of APRA activities. The Child and Family Services Agency contracts for treatment slots in two alternative programs designed to meet the specific needs of their clients. The DC Housing Authority oversees three different programs designed to reduce substance abuse and violence in public housing. Finally, the DC Public Schools' Peaceable Schools Initiative seeks to build the capacity of local schools to create and sustain safe, disciplined, and drug-free learning environments.

<p>Table 3</p> <p>Substance Abuse Arrests, 1996-00</p>					
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Adults					
Drug Sales	895	845	939	1,544	1,153
Drug Poss.	5,953	5,754	5,221	5,156	5,157
DUI	2,493	2,487	2,112	1,579	1,593
Liquor law	74	123	200	106	139
Subtotal	9,415	9,209	8,472	8,385	8,042
Juveniles					
Drug Sales	69	67	94	122	95
Drug Poss.	634	551	444	419	382
DUI	0	1	0	0	0
Liquor law	2	1	1	1	2
Subtotal	705	620	539	542	479
Total	10,120	9,829	9,011	8,927	8,521
All MPD Arrests	43,597	53,636	47,097	44,243	43,005

Source: Metropolitan Police Department Research Unit

facilities conducted in September of 2001 revealed that 25 percent of the inmates were being held for violations of drug laws or for charges related to alcohol abuse (e.g., driving while intoxicated).

Criminal justice-related agencies also provide drug-testing services and a substantial amount of treatment. For example, the Department of Corrections provides substance abuse counseling to inmates.

DIRECT GOVERNMENTAL VS. INDIRECT EXPENDITURES

The budget figures referenced in this chapter represent the substance abuse budget of the District, *not the cost of substance abuse to the District government*. In other words, the figures reported in Tables 1 and 2 represent direct governmental expenditures used to administer treatment, prevention, and criminal justice services in response to the problems of

substance abuse. They do not, however, reflect all of the services provided to individuals who abuse addictive substances. Included in the estimates here, for example, is the *direct* expense of providing substance abuse treatment services to the homeless, but not the *indirect* expenditures associated with providing shelter for the homeless who have substance abuse problems.

The reason for making this distinction is to clarify that only those resources *directly linked* to reducing the level of substance abuse and its consequences are being “counted” in the substance abuse budget estimates. If a broader definition of substance abuse-related government resources were to be used, the total would be much larger. For example, the total budget for the Child and Family Services

some research suggests as much as 70 percent of child protection cases are a consequence of substance abuse in the family, the indirect cost of managing these cases might be as high as \$118 million. Included in the substance abuse budget estimates, though, is the slightly less than \$3 million the agency devotes to purchasing substance abuse treatment services for its clients.

The District’s Children and Youth Investment Partnership, arguably works indirectly to prevent substance abuse. The Partnership provides funds for child care subsidies, after-school learning centers, recreational facilities, youth employment, and other activities designed to support young residents. As such, these activities provide an alternative for youth tempted by, or involved with drugs and alcohol. The District contributed \$5 million to the program from its operating budget. Assuming that 20 percent of the program’s activities are related to the prevention of substance abuse, there would be an indirect substance abuse programming investment of \$1 million.

Programs designed to assist the homeless offer help to some of the city’s most vulnerable citizens. Research suggests that about 35 percent of those living on the streets have substance abuse problems. Given the \$16 million the District spends on the homeless, as much as \$5.6 million of these funds may be attributed to addressing their substance abuse-related problems.

Treating the health consequences of substance abuse, including hepatitis, liver disease and HIV/AIDS, is extremely costly. The District FY 2001 budget contained over \$51 million to prevent and treat these diseases. Given the connection between intravenous drug use and the transmission of HIV, a significant share of those costs is related to substance abuse. Assuming that one-third of HIV/AIDS cases are attributed to needle sharing and IV drug users transmitting the disease through unprotected sex, \$17 million of these funds could be considered to be related to substance abuse.

<p>Table 4</p> <p>Examples of <u>Indirect</u> Substance Abuse Expenditures</p> <p>(millions of dollars)</p>		
DC Agency	Estimated FY 2001 Budget	Program Description
Child and Family Services Administration	118.0	Protective services for children of substance abusers
Children and Youth Investment Partnership	1.0	Providing services and activities supporting at-risk youth.
Metropolitan Police	120.0	Arrest of substance abusers who commit property and other crimes
DC Human Services	5.6	Homeless assistance programs
Dept. of Health	17.0	HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other disease treatment and prevention.
Total, Examples from DC Agencies	261.6	

Administration in FY2001 was \$168 million. (As of May 2002, approximately 3,100 children were in foster care at a cost of approximately \$9,625 per year.) Given that

Finally, the notion of indirect costs has implications for criminal justice programs as well. The direct expenditure estimate for the Metropolitan Police Department in Table 1 (see page 3-2) of \$44.7 million is derived from the number of substance abuse-related arrests (18.6% in 2000) in relation to the total cost of field operations for fiscal year 2001 (\$239 million). The impact of substance abuse on the criminal justice system can be thought of much more broadly, however. Individuals often steal in order to generate money to buy illicit drugs. They also often commit crimes while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. If one were to consider that 69% of all individuals arrested by the MPD test positive for illicit drugs, it could be argued that as much as \$165 million of the MPD budget is substance abuse-related.

These examples highlighted in Table 4 would push the estimate of indirect government spending by the District over \$261 million in fiscal year 2001. If one were to include the cost of income maintenance programs, mental health services, and other activities with a substance abuse connection, the total might top \$500 million.

As was shown in Figure 1, the indirect costs associated with drug abuse far outweigh

the direct costs of drug control prevention and treatment. Studies suggest that the most cost effective approach to dealing with substance abuse is through effective treatment. Science-based prevention efforts have also shown promise in reducing the indirect costs associated with substance abuse.

Taken together, these facts provide policy-makers with a powerful message. Targeting funds to effective substance abuse prevention and treatment programs is not only a logical, common sense approach, but as research indicates, is also one that in the long run, promises to reduce overall costs (including indirect costs) of responding to substance abuse.

CONCLUSION

A substance abuse budget, as an estimate of *direct expenditures*, provides a starting point and a frame of reference for making strategic decisions about policy. Substance abuse program funds represent the costs that *most directly* affect the abuse of substances in the District. In other words, direct funds, and the programs associated with them, represent the “true” policy levers that can be moved and adjusted to address a particular threat confronting a city. It is important to remember, however, that as direct expenditures, they represent *only a fraction* of the total cost of substance abuse and its consequences.

